

# Southern Mongolian

**Southern Mongolian** or **Inner Mongolian** (Mongolian: ᠰᠤᠮᠤᠩᠭᠣᠯᠢᠨ ᠤᠯᠤᠰ *Öbör mongyol ayalyu*) is a proposed

major dialect group within the taxonomy of the Mongolian language. It is assumed by most Southern Mongolia linguists and would be on the same level as the other three major dialect groups Khalkha, Buryat, Oirat.<sup>[1]</sup> Southern Mongolian would consist of the dialects Chakhar, Ordos, Baarin, Khorchin, Kharchin and (possibly) Alasha that originated from Oirat.<sup>[2]</sup> The varieties spoken in Xilin Gol which form a major dialect of their own right and are close to Khalkha<sup>[3]</sup> are classified as belonging to Chakhar in this approach.<sup>[4]</sup> Because Southern Mongolian would consist of all non-Buryat Mongolian varieties spoken in Inner Mongolia, this classification has been argued against by several linguists who hold that there is a dialect continuum between Khalkha and the Southern Mongolian varieties that rather favours grouping Chakhar, Ordos and Khalkha on the one hand and Khorchin and Kharchin on the other hand,<sup>[5]</sup> or at least that "Mongolian proper" is an immediate member of Mongolian/Mongolic.<sup>[6]</sup> On the other hand, the argument that Southern Mongolian is distinct is based on considerations such as the following:

- Southern Mongolian is the Standard dialect of Inner Mongolia, while Khalkha is the Standard language of the Mongolian state.
- Southern Mongolians continue to use the Mongolian script, while Khalkhas have switched to Cyrillic script, which rather closely resembles the pronunciation of the Khalkha dialect.
- Southern Mongolian has been under strong influence from Chinese, while Khalkha has been under strong influence from Russian.<sup>[7]</sup>

Given its intended status that was formally implemented and delimited at a conference in Ürümqi in 1979,<sup>[8]</sup> Southern Mongolian has been the object of several grammars.<sup>[9]</sup> This includes an eclectic grammar that specifically deals with normative spoken language<sup>[10]</sup> and which is based on the Chakhar dialect as spoken in the Plain Blue Banner on which the normative Southern Mongolian pronunciation **Standard sounds** (Mongolian: ᠪᠠᠷᠢᠮ ᠵᠢᠶᠠ ᠠᠪᠢᠶᠠ *barim jiy-a abiy-a*) is based. But legally, the grammar of all Southern Mongolian

dialects jointly provides the standard grammar. This is still a delimitation, as Buryat and Oirat speakers in China are obliged to use Southern Mongolian as their standard variety as well.<sup>[11]</sup> To work as a school teacher, news anchor etc., a special command of Southern Mongolian is required and tested. The test manual focuses mainly on pronunciation, but to some degree also on vocabulary, while syntax is stated to be tested, but left to the evaluators. To teach Mongolian, a score of more than 90% is needed, while teachers of other subjects are only required to obtain 80%, the minimum score for successful completion.<sup>[12]</sup>

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## See also

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- Mongolian name

## References

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1. e.g. Secen et al. 1998, Buu 2005: 5, Bayancogtu 2007: 282
2. Sečenbayatur et al. 2005: 158-194
3. Janhunen 2003: 179-180
4. Sečenbayatur 2003: 7
5. e.g. Luvsanvandan 1959, Janhunen 2003. However, Janhunen classifies Ordos as a *language* and thus does not group it with Khalkha, Chakhar and Xilin Gol.
6. e.g. Svantesson et al. 2005
7. Sečenbayatur et al. 2005: 191-192
8. Sečenbayatur et al. 2005: 179
9. e.g. Öbür mongyul-un yeke suryayuli 1964, Qaserdeni et al. 1996, Činggeltei 1999
10. Qaserdeni et al. 2006
11. Sečenbayatur et al. 2005: 85
12. Committee 2003

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- Svantesson, Jan-Olof, Anna Tsendina, Anastasia Karlsson, Vivan Franzén (2005): *The Phonology of Mongolian*. New York: Oxford University Press.

## External link

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- [Southern Mongolia Congress \(http://southmongolia.org\)](http://southmongolia.org)
  - [Southern Mongolian National Party \(http://smnp.org\)](http://smnp.org)
  - [Mongolian liberal union party \(http://lupm.org\)](http://lupm.org)
  - [Southern Mongolian News \(http://smn.news\)](http://smn.news)
  - [Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Center \(http://www.smhric.org\)](http://www.smhric.org)
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